

REMARKS FOR

Alison Scott

Deputy Minister of Energy

CORE Conference

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Good afternoon and welcome to this CORE session, entitled “Environment & Sustainable Energy.” I am Alison Scott, Deputy Minister of the Nova Scotia Department of Energy. It is my pleasure to be here today to chair this distinguished panel.

The presenters in this session will be Rob Bennett from Nova Scotia Power; John Woods with Minas Basin Pulp & Power Company; Andy Henry with Dalhousie University and Aldyen Donnelly with Greenhouse Emissions Management Consortium.

There will be a question and answer period at the end of the session. If you think of a questions during any of the presentations, please write it on the card provided on your seat, and one of OTANS staff will collect it for me to ask during the few minutes we will have at the end of the presentations.

Most of us here today realize that we are at a energy cross-roads.

On one hand, we face the consequences of a carbon-heavy world and the greenhouse gases that come with it.

On the other, we still want to grow. We still want to use energy. In fact, our demand for energy continues to grow.

How do we resolve this disconnect between climate change and energy use?

We are coming to the realization that we, as individuals, must each take responsibility. I think we are also aware that with obligation comes opportunity....

....and we're fortunate to have the speakers we have today...who understand both these obligations and opportunities.

Before I introduce them, I'll take a few minutes to review where we are as a province, and where we are headed.

First: where we are.

In Nova Scotia, electricity generation is far and away the number one source of greenhouse gas emissions.

88 per cent of our electricity generation comes from fossil-fuels, and accounts for nearly 50 per cent of the province's emissions.

Our carbon-intensive power system is a problem.

Not only from an environmental perspective, but also in terms of economics ... Nova Scotia is vulnerable to the rising costs of world energy prices.

But this carbon-based system is also an opportunity ... an opportunity for renewable energy to make a significant impact in Nova Scotia.

In 2007, the Province put the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act into force. Included in the 21 goals of the Act is the following deadline:

- by the year 2020 greenhouse gases will be reduced to 10 per cent below 1990 levels ... roughly 25 per cent below 2005 levels

One of the single most important regulations to support this goal is the R-E-S ... the renewable energy standard.

The R-E-S requires utilities to increase renewables to nearly 20 per cent of total electricity supply by 2013.

Most of that commitment will be met with wind... and we have already seen Nova Scotia Power finalize contracts for 240 megawatts of wind this year.

I believe the R-E-S is one of the most positive and dramatic regulations we have seen in Nova Scotia.

When I say dramatic - I also mean to imply there will be challenges.

There will be new demands on an electricity system that wasn't designed for large amounts of variable generation.

Looking head to 2013, our recent wind integration study indicates that by that date, we could have the capacity to generate a total of 580 megawatts of wind power... enough for about 175,000 homes.

In terms of emissions, by increasing wind generation to 580 megawatts, we will cut an estimated 1.3 million tonnes of greenhouse gas from our atmosphere. That's the equivalent of taking about 232 thousand cars off the road.

That is a lot of wind energy: 580 megawatts of capacity ... on a system that will supply a total of only about 2,500 megawatts.

Its full implications for the grid won't be clear without more experience.

Right now, Nova Scotia's electricity system has limited interconnection with neighbouring provinces, and limited quick-response ability. This gives Nova Scotia less flexibility to deal with large amounts of wind energy.

This is one of the reasons tidal energy warrants serious consideration. A predictable source ... and a large resource.

Research indicates Nova Scotia has the best site for tidal power generation in North America, with a world-class resource in close proximity to an existing grid and potential users.

The Bay of Fundy moves 100 billion tons of water every tide – more than the combined flow of all the rivers and streams in the world.

Three companies are working to create the first tidal energy demonstration centre in North America...and two of the players are here with us today.

This project has created a lot of excitement both here and around the world ... with the possibility of making power from the highest tides within the next couple of years.

The technology is exciting, but these are early days, and there is a lot of work to do before we can understand its true potential.

Bio-energy may also be a worthy investment in the renewable sector, with opportunities in both the forestry and agricultural sectors.

But we must keep our feet on the ground.

We need to carefully assess what types of biofuels can be sustainably developed in our region.

We need to cooperate with other regions ... across the energy, forestry and agricultural sectors ... if we want bioenergy opportunities to materialize.

And that brings me to my last point ... **Cooperation.**

In the Wind Integration Study I mentioned, one of the key findings was that our ability to integrate more renewables in the future will depend greatly on our interconnections to neighbouring regions.

If we want to go further, we will need greater regional connection and back up supply.

This will take cooperation, and a willingness by many people to make the kind of expensive investments needed to strengthen our electricity grids.

By working together, becoming more connected throughout Atlantic Canada, each of us is better able to bring in more renewable power.

And on that note...the Province has enjoyed the cooperation of the following individuals on a wide range of energy issues.

Now lets here from our speakers.....

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